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Tech Assignment – Critical Thinking

1. **Explore the Intel Seeing Reason Tool. Click on the Overview and Benefits link. How does the tool facilitate students’ critical thinking?**

As a student uses the Seeing Reason Tool, they incorporate many modes of thinking. It gives them a way to “think out loud” and assess their understanding of and the relationships between concepts. It encourages students to learn and experiment with abstract thought. In transferring their logical thinking into a map form, they use spatial intelligence. This tool assists students in higher order thinking as they examine both simple and complex cause–and-effect relationships.

1. **Click on Try the Tool and then click on the Demo and read the Project Description Road Safety. The map shows student’s ideas about causes of traffic jams. Create a new factor, describe its relationship to traffic jams, and add it to the map. Explain what you did.**

I added the factor of emergency vehicles and their being a small contributor to traffic jams. I said that as vehicles needed to make room for an ambulance or a fire truck, and then since those cars needed to navigate back onto the main roadway it would contribute to traffic jams. It added a thin blue line between my box and the traffic jam box.

1. **Next click on the Tutorial (underneath Demo on the Try the Tool page) and view the animation. What are the key steps a teacher must take to set up the Seeing Reason Tool and engage students in using the tool?**

Once the teacher sets up the project and assigns teams, they will need to direct the students in using the tool. First the factors need to be shown and then the cause-and-effect relationships will connect the factors. Once a map is made, the students will need to test their ideas through research &/or observation. The maps can be refined as more information is gathered. Once the students have outlined and researched and observed, they present their findings and the teacher gives the students an opportunity to figure out a way to fix the problem and come up with recommendations for doing so. Lastly, the teacher assesses the results.

1. **Click on the Project Examples link and explore the Project Ideas and Unit Plans. How do the examples stimulate your thinking of how to use the Seeing Reason Tool?**

This would be an interesting tool to use in the upper grades of a general music classroom – assuming that there was more than 20 minutes of music for the class in one week, and assuming that we had access to the computer lab. I may work with the classroom teacher on creating a project in conjunction with music as that seems much more realistic. They could perhaps explore the influence and role of music during times of war. Maybe what contributed to Woodstock and the musicians who were involved? Perhaps the kinds of songs that were played and how the public reacted to them.

1. **Explore the Intel Showing Evidence Tool. Click on the Overview and Benefits link. How does the tool facilitate students’ critical thinking?**

The students need to justify and defend claims that they make. This is much more than just stating an opinion and deciding that you are right. There must be evidence supporting your claim and you must be able to argue your way. Evaluation and debate are higher order thinking skills that are developed and practiced with this tool. This also increases content area knowledge.

1. **Click on Try the Tool and watch the Animated Overview to learn how to set up an account and copy a project into the Teacher Workspace. Next click on the Secondary Demo and read the Project Description for Serious Malady Explain how each of the assessments provides guidance to students throughout the project.**

The table is interactive and there is a lot of information available on it. The teacher can look at it at any time and comment on student work or provide direction along the way.

1. **What are the key steps a teacher must take to set up the Showing Evidence Tool and engage students in using the tool?**

The set-up in using any of these tools is important. I like how in this one the students are examining claims set forth and are acting as members of the EPA. The Showing Evidence Tool is helpful in organizing and keeping track of information. The teacher must be familiar with the tool so that they can make it easy for the students to use. The teacher should show the students how the information is organized – the claim, the evidence and the research.

1. **Click on the Project Examples link and explore the Project Ideas and Unit Plans. How do the examples stimulate your thinking of how to use the Showing Evidence Tool?**

There are many reasons to have music available to all students. I would have my students research and evaluate claims made by advocates for music education to make a determination whether or not we should have music in the schools.